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Fall 1973

lotus steele

hey, bunky!

if youre wondering what to do with this terrific package of poetry, art and neat stuff, heres a few handy dandy hints: paste your favorite pieces on the old dorm wall, step on the suicide poems, give what ya dont like to a friend (wow), wrap fish in the mediocre art, roll dope in the existential writings. remember kids, "...a million and one meal-worms cant be wrong."

Fall 1973

calvert

elijuh mirochnik — editor
larry blonder — associate editor
george kressley — poetry editor
ritch kepler — art editor

and many and sundry friends.

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Childhood debt

Payment is due

Payment is due

The note falls
Ready to pay
This child reaches age eighteen
And the parents stand ready settle a claim
Shelter, in a house we bought for you
Life, we sacrificed so you could have so much
This and even more we gave to you
Even those damn hippy clothes on your jackass back
With fingers to nose and shouts to ear
Still we did give them to you.
Wait
Go back Underline twice
Hear that interesting word gave

And now the note falls due
And they want me to repay
A promisory signature for a child to be just like you
Slam doors on the room
I owe you for board
Pound on your dresser since you claim it
Well what's inside is mine
Just the wooden chest bears your mark

Credit their account
For schooling both in school and out
You taught me too well
Look out for number one first
And number one always
That's the lessen that cost me the most
Take off the total six hundred a year
And a little more now the exemption went up

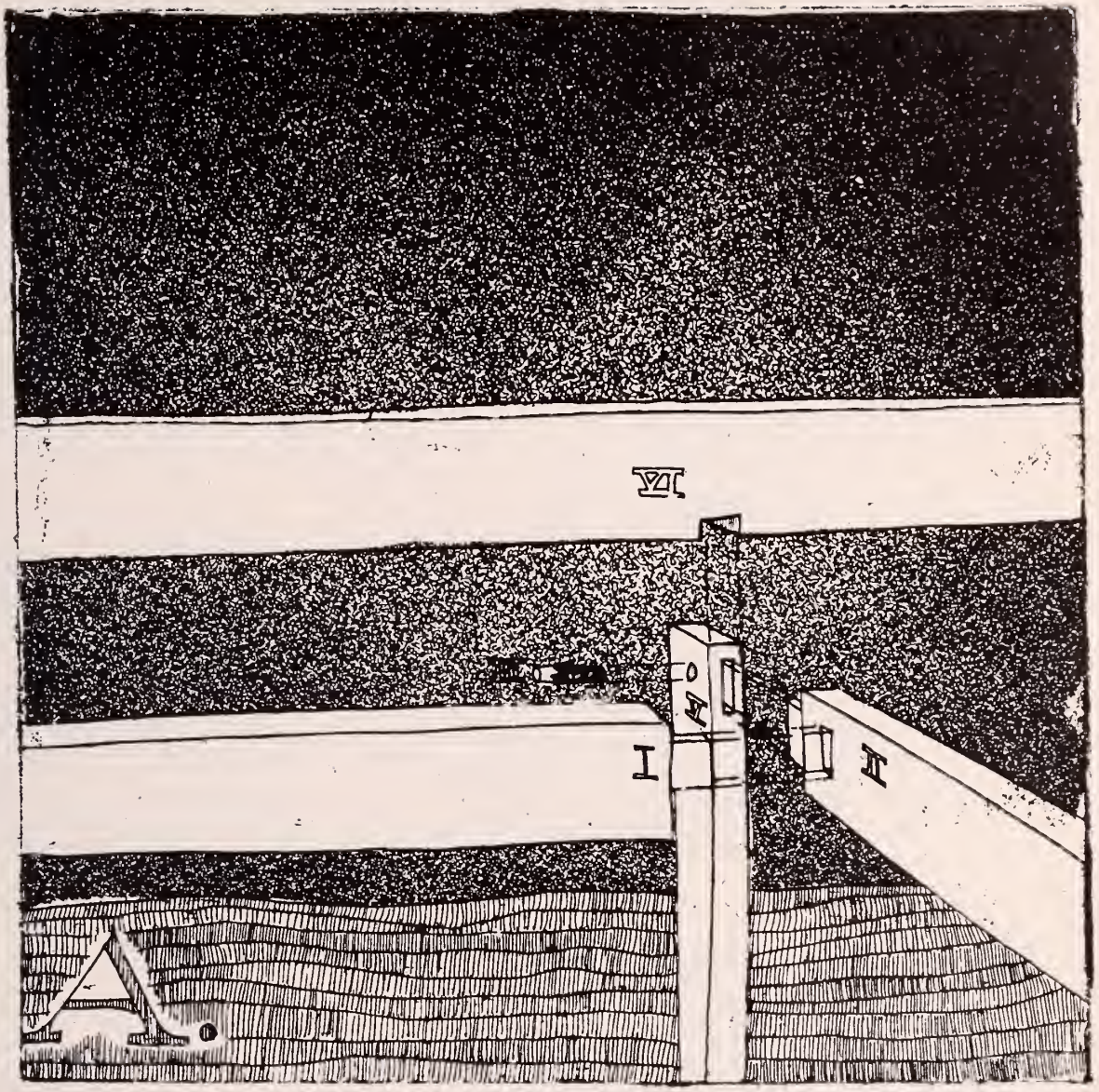
I'll get you your payment
But money is the coin you deserve
If you don't want to feel cheated
My birth wasn't a bank loan
No contract did I sign
So there's no need for me
To pay off by being just like you
Nineteen years enough of your shit
Go run up a bill with some other sucker
This one is through.

— kim kaplan

I keep spending the night with the wrong woman.
I keep telling myself that I don't listen.
My ear seems pinned to one of those childhood
pipes . . . a voice at the other end
is trying hard to break my eardrums.

— larry blonder

ned bernton,
mike corlis,
jim bambino,
mike shaffer,
ernesto neira



michael justin dowling

Under the mask
counting the numbers back
A vision set itself in my eyes
Slowly spread through the
veins, flesh, and bone.

And as it drifted to
every cell, it became so
vivid and overwhelming
that I knew it would be true

I would die in a simple operation.

In one last fearful
second of consciousness
I tried to tell them.
Tried to reach for the
white cloth coat.
But all I could feel
were tears upon my face.
For a crystal was in my throat
and my eyes were shut, ether tight.

— john sery

ned bernton

the sun gives way
sunburned diver
such a long way away
not to clear the table of the land
only to set a place:
this is how I move about
this field of brittle papers
the maps fit together
old veined hands
and armfuls of routes

In Versailles Vienne Vienna
red spinnakers raised
tell me the place
and the wine of the place
I will be there with clean glasses
I can see you now
I can see you clearly
lying on white sheets
the boot on the shovel
leaning like the morning
will never uproot us
such a terrible mess
but I have brought the glasses
and brought clean glasses

down the blue corridor she returned
by dinner and I said your hands they are
so raw she said they had sprouted
they sound a short-cut between points of light
the first day was horizontals the second
perpendiculars on the third the rivers rose
in the valleys in the fields
and if you prick yourself she showed me
on points of light you bleed roses
to your mother roses to your man

when she came to dinner her wrists were
so thin she can hardly hold the glass
and I helped her I helped her hold it
and still she made a mess of everything
and got the whole front of her blouse wet
I didn't know what to say she didn't say
I'd rather die before going back there
I would have said the authorities
will hear about this I'd said but she rose and
said tell me the place and how they
name the wine of the place and I said honey
it'll be a long time before you see
any wine and she said yes I have been
farsighted but I mean to get glasses

*nlm

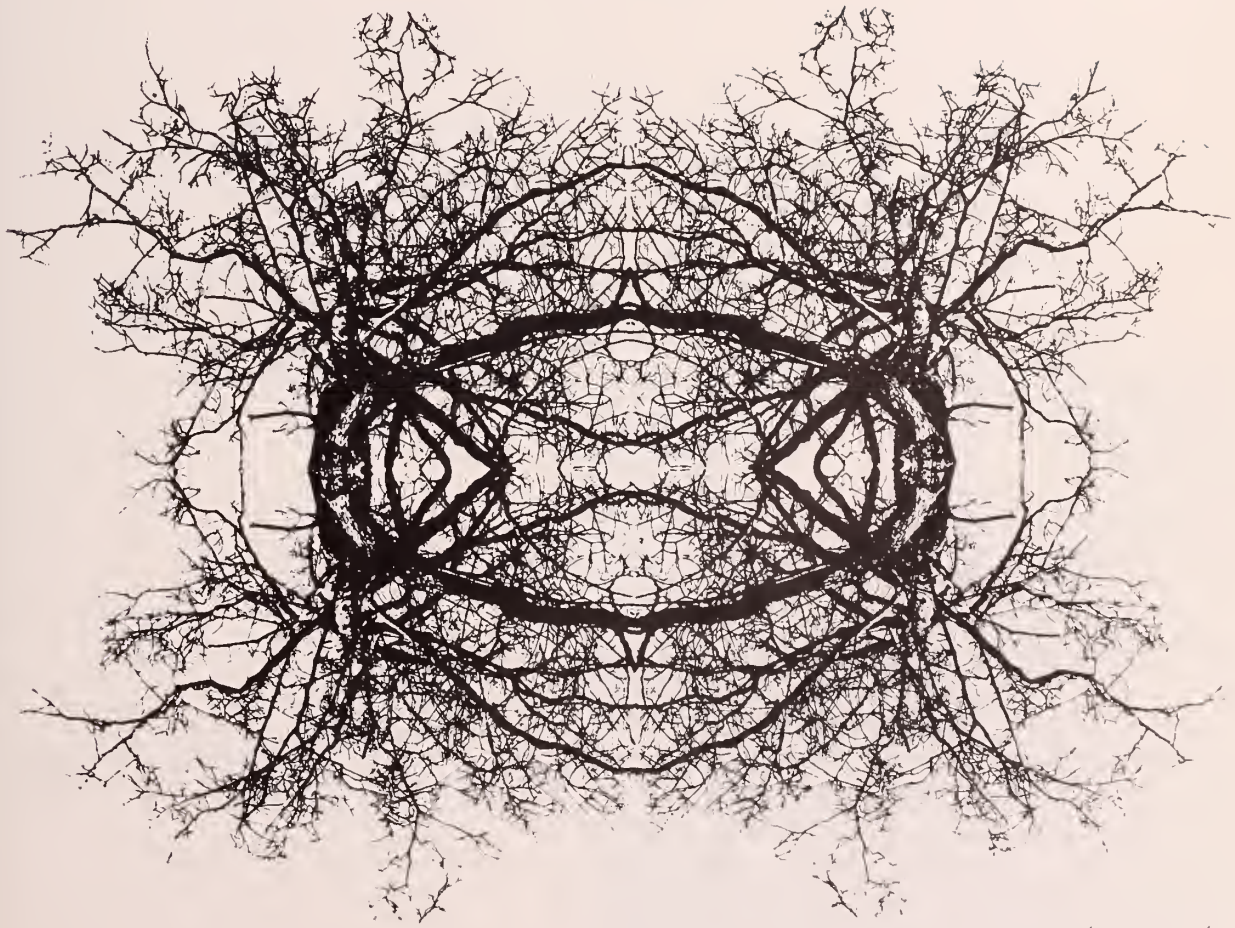
Indigent

Voyeur of the bygone,
apathetic
face pressed against the pane,
nose contorted
above vapor pearling onto glass,

Your eyes cast vapid across
leaves that fluster below
in absurd reformations,
like broken hands attempting prayer,

And past the yard
to where the wind pushes
a dull and peeling perambulator
down the street on wobbling
wheels.

— pat mckinley



lotus steele

Burial of a Nun

Night assembles them like stars for the vigil.
They come to the white shape
that is not darkness yet
to the mouth
the suction valve that breathes, in a heavy puff,
the heavy air
of death.

She is not ready to be stored away
like an umbrella
her small head and long faded skirts.

It has always been like this.
Compartments
alcove
pew.
What heavens there have been
have been of her own making.
Even now
she peels ceiling into sky.

You are wrong who think that death
does not affect them.
These —
whose risk haunts them from the newly emptied pew
whose prayer is the vision
of an open umbrella
hanging in the winds.

— nannette dobson

ernesto neira

Big Girl

Go ahead and laugh,
but she'll have to be a big girl —
boots caked with the cowyard,
blanket skirt
and maybe threaded figs and sweet
potatoes under
hips bowed wide and her
legs thick chunked,
takes me under, then later sometime,
my kid, he'll land
Slap!
in a broken puddle beneath her.

— bruce duffy

Nude mannikin in darkness of my thoughts by the candle

I can see your shape
the outline of what is you
projects shadows on my wall.
You are getting old
your hair is falling out
and in candle light
you're armless.

I have sat a long time
watching you dance on my walls
and sometimes I blow air at the candle
making you dance faster for a moment.
Like a ballerina you bend to me.

I blow out the candle
and in all the darkness
which consumes us now
I lie back in bed
knowing your presence is not far off.

I have walked over to you
in darkness
stretched out my arm
placed my hand gently
on your waist
and felt pins
and cloth.

— ritch kepler

jann wolf

There's something on the road ahead

That night,
When I walked back to the ruptured possum,
The stars
The quiet wind and trees
were watching.
I grabbed the possums tail
And sickened by the gore,
I slung her into a ditch.

Two glowing spots of light are ahead
Low to ground.
My hands tighten on the wheel
My legs stiffen
as I remember the smash
and the long smear on the asphalt.
Once again I drag
the broken shape into the grass
and sniff the air.
The night turns bright
The sky fills with eyes:
I run blinded before
the shriek of the wind.

— george kressley

Inspiration

Summer nights
on the bath house
I have sat and watched the river
waiting for the goddess
to rise from the water.

I imagine her rising
casting images
that flicker in the moonlight
like a thousand stars
across the rippling tide.

But somehow in the darkness
I have heard only
the croaking of frogs
and have ended counting muskrats
surfacing in the reflection of the pier light.

— vickie beard

In Fall River

In
Fall River
old mill town
night is sacrament.

The tallest mill goes black
brick wall and iron is
dagger
against the sky.

At dagger point
the sun
a great persimmon
presses in,
punctures.
Sure flesh
on old Fall River
falls.

The children
covered with seed
grow old
settling down for night.

— nannette dobson

Sestina (A dirge)

Each day like a cow in
Heat rubs the shrouded bark of mourning
Heavy trees as they moan and
Shrink like scorched marigolds. Their
Black trunks look like tears
Gone hard with thieving pain.

Each night copulates with neon pain.
Its vestigial blood is stop-lights in
Times square and "smoke a camel" smoke tears,
And arcades where gunners ram the dolly morning
Above the ZIG ZAG movie. Their
Image moves backwards tall and

Shrinking (lap dissolve) to a beach hull and
War husks eaten by the chewing waves. Pain
Pulls the water back and arches for their
Thrust and run up pock-marked sand as in
Summer's dizziness the mounting morning
Light spreads like vaporous tears.

The twisting eel grass tears
Into the death gray destroyer hull and
Now this silent torn and sea gull jetty mourns
Marooned while slipping sand pains
Into the rust faced slabs of steel. In
Winthrop, Boston, Detroit the flags there

Drop like eyelids in every photo. Their
Smiling sons sit frozen. Their tears
Are spread out in silver nitrate gray. In
Black and white paper mementos sons and
Sweethearts embrace forever. The pain,
The murder is in every tree-veined naked morning.

Silent open thieving pain takes morning
Light across still yards. There
Men and women reach each window pane
And lift shades slow, nothing moves. No tears.
The flag draped trees are packed away and
Hitler and Stalin like fake cards in

A stacked deck, are in. We are sick of mourning.
They gamble, throw the dice and — Will their
Number 7 scream of slag-heap tears? The thief's shadow is pain.

— prudence barry

Manna

It is spring,
the manniphera are making honeydew.
Even without you,
I know how the Jews
were astonished in the wilderness
and renewed their lives.

Loving
I have only the key in the lock
and the cats
to come down the stairs and meet me,
which is a miracle too.

Friends who would not understand
the lifting arms,
I dance for you
because the television is making music.
I go round and round,
I send you love.

— ruthellen quillen

yllis hecht

Swallowed-up by the night

You think the curtains
are made of silk
don't you?
Well you're wrong
Go ahead!

You think the curtains
are made of silk
don't you?
Well you're wrong
Go ahead!
touch them if you want
they are skins
of snakes
grown about you
Don't tell me
that getting out
is easy business
for a woman of your talents
It's all lies!
I'm in that gut
being eaten down
slowly
just as you are
into nourishment
and waste:
the only things that can
get out

Go back to sleep.
I've only been digging
through the sheets
with my eyes
thinking
to rub the ribs
of this room
together
into dawn.

— chris paulis

Fragments

A shadow blew through the room
broad wings curling
toward the south
folding the wind
like fleeing sheets of newspaper.

* * *

Beneath the bird-nest
full of shattered egg-shapes
and insatiable snakes

stones of the forest
growing wings.

— chris paulis

hardy cook

phyllis gruss

ned bernton

Jennifer hugs me even though I am not sure

It's as easy as pie
for one girl to hug
another

and not mean
anything beyond
the social contact like

a show that opens
at a gallery
with wine and cheese

for the sophisticated
to wonder at
and see. This may

only be another
posh opening that
lasts until the lost

hours of the morning.
Puffing itself up
with tiny small talk and

smart jazz music
played low. Or could
it be a chance at last to

not feel so like a lamp post
with a lost drunk clutched
to me for support.

— sharon canavan

Opening

I cryed to her
stone woman, worn by chisel,
broken by the droning tide.
Crack that stone,
There must be an opening —
I came from one.

I need to crawl into that tiny hole.
Inside the stone,
tempid water curled my form.
While I lay folded in the warm bath,
ice formed around the stone.

Coming out,
I reach:
Dry ice, no opening.
I burn, the warm bath is now ice water,

Is now blocks of ice.

— adele slaughter

Ode on a Bomb

Written round its girdle is a legend:
"What I destroy is mine.
That's all I need to know."

— bruce szmajda

I-Ching On 95

The 65th hexagram:
Wheels
The Image —
Chevy over asphalt
The wise man knows
his lot in life
He parks without difficulty
Twenty-five cents for
one hour
No Change

The road on 95
A careful progression
of dead dogs and such.
Tiny pinpoint eyes
that leap from the trees
onto the road.
One heap
hit by something
hulking and large
stretched on for twenty feet
(Is that dark spot its heart?)

I chase my highbeam lights
across America

The road of
french fries
and
hamburgers
it takes two hands to handle
The Burger King
and Dairy Queen

The trail of loose change
Who killed the buffalo?
Who killed Kennedy?

I carry no gun
I am armed and dangerous.

— john corame

rdy cook

Spoiled

When you went away,
I thought I was falling into that hole again;
the one with the slippery sides and nothing at the bottom,
where no one can hear me call.

When you came back,
I didn't want you.

jack paltell

Winner
Family Portrait Contest

susan melkisethian

Calvert scores again with another rock-your-socks-off in-depth interview. This time we got together with some filmmaking people, an old dog and our inflatable Sony cassette. Sery and Manekin are our stars of the silver screen.

CALVERT: O.K., take two. John, say something.
SERY: Four score and seven years ago . . .
MADAME: John, what's your last name?
SERY: Sery, S-E-R-Y.
CALVERT: I understand the University of Maryland filmmakers are noted for their perverted sexual stuff *(LONG Silence)* oh well. Do you have all your own equipment?
SERY: Uh, well, we're taking this 16mm film course, and it's the first chance I've had to work in 16mm. It's much easier to do an appreciable amount of film in super-8.
CALVERT: How about 35mm?
SERY: It would be impractical. We couldn't afford to buy the film.
MANEKIN: You couldn't even afford to rent the camera. A good 35mm camera rents in the area of $25,000. The typical Hollywood camera is a Mitchell and it costs in the area of $100,000.
CALVERT: Is there really any credibility to the label student or underground film? Like, what do they mean?
MANEKIN: A student film is a film made by students
SERY: I think the difference is in content. Most underground films would come under the heading of student films.
MANEKIN: That term underground film is the worst terminology you can ever have. Generally, it's a film that is not commercially distributed.
CALVERT: How did you guys get into the filming media?
MANEKIN: I was always interested in films. Some friends of mine had an old army surplus camera that I bought.
SERY: I started out making home movies, and gradually picked up the equipment I have now. Just sort of worked myself up. Unless you have a lot of money to buy the equipment, or are taking a course, it's really hard to really do much.
MADAME: What are some other problems you have with filming, besides money?
SERY: Well, there are basically two problems. One, people are very paranoid about taking their pictures. People will start putting newspapers over their faces and demanding that I not use the film. The second one is if you do filming in public places, you get hassled a lot, by like, store owners. I was doing this one film in a parking lot and was told that I would have to get permission from every store on the parking lot.
MANEKIN: A lot of that stuff is bullshit. The worst place to go is Prince Georges Plaza. I was shooting a film there at about eleven in front of the Hecht company, and a security guard turned off the lights. I asked him why he did it and he said the management said, "No."

" *My main cast, of course, are a cornflake, an English muffin and a raisin* "

CALVERT: What do you guys do for actors?
MANEKIN: I try to avoid people
SERY: Friends are no problem, they are very cooperative and all and will do what you want them to do, but they usually can't act.

(The next part of the tape is muddled, containing laughter and a high naval voice saying, "Just because you have a diseased mind . . .)

SERY: A lot of the films I have taken just kind of all into three types: comedy type, sort of a documentary type and a third type, just sort of visual poems.
MANEKIN: Right now I'm working on a film that takes the Simon and Garfunkel song "Punky's Dilemma" completely literally, so my main cast, of course, are a cornflake, an English muffin and a raisin. Even though I have a good microscopic lens, I'm using a prune for the raisin in the closeups.
(Enter dog.)
SERY: He's going to eat the microphone.
CALVERT: Tape temporarily stopped due to destruction of microphone.
SERY: Bark
(Exit dog.)
CALVERT: Suppose you had a finished film, what would you do with it, if you thought it was a really good film?
MANEKIN: Producers are thought of as bloodsuckers, but they are angelic in comparison to the distributors. They really rip off filmmakers. It's a joke really. You don't get your film shown unless you give it to a distributor.
CALVERT: What do you mean by a distributor "ripping a film off?"
MANEKIN: They will have these loopholes in the contract so they will get all the money. The people who filmed *Gimme Shelter* never got any money for it because the distributors and the Stones took all the money. At least, this is what I heard, first person. They didn't even know when it was shown on T.V.
SERY: Another problem is that you have to have release forms for everything that is in the film: music, people, names, etc.
CALVERT: Is there a grad school in filmmaking?
(The ever present Calvert staff fumbles for pertinence.)
SERY: That's the thing, there are only two filmmaking courses at the University and a few years ago, there weren't any.
MANEKIN: I don't think that the average student filmmaker has his own equipment, anyways.
SERY: Sort of depends on which stage you are in.
CALVERT: Let's suppose that both you guys have an unlimited budget, and you can make any film you want. What kind of a film would you make?
MANEKIN: I already have a dream film. I would like to do a take-off on a science fiction story by Asmiov. It's a futuristic kind of thing that's more of a philosophical kind of thing than science fiction.
SERY: Unlimited money? That really is such a fantasy. I have never given it much thought. I guess what I would like to do, that would be called *In the End Electric*, about how electricity is the very foundation for human existance now. If I had enough money, I could do a really good job on that.

" . . *I really get mad when they say one of these names, then they just sort of start slobbering* . . "

MANEKIN: If I had, like, five million dollars, I'd probably just sit around for about 20 years trying to figure out what I would make.
CALVERT: So a lot of film conceptualizing is dependent on funds, right?
SERY: Yeah, sure.
MANEKIN: That is if you are a student filmmaker. You don't go around picking films that you damn well know would cost too much.
SERY: As long as you just need a small cast of people, you can do almost anything.
MANEKIN: Yeah, but if you want a really polished product, then you get into lab costs like color balancing and dissolves, etc. Any optical effect, the minimum, the minimum, is 50 bucks.
CALVERT: So a lot of the effects done in film today are done in the lab?
MANEKIN: Oh, everything.
CALVERT: Everything? When you do a film, do you have this thing in your head like, "I'm a filmmaker, and I'm shooting a film," and so, you look for and think about camera angles, and such. What goes on in your head?
SERY: Well, the first thing you do is get a general idea of what shots you want to do, but I don't have specific camera angles in my head. It's almost impossible to figure out the actual camera angles until you actually go there.
MANEKIN: I usually try to thing of an angle that has been used before and think how it looks, like a really good director would use. All the angles have been done. I approach it that way first.
CALVERT: Yeah, but when you shoot, you don't have that in your mind do you? It just sort of happens, doesn't it?
SERY: Usually you do not think up the angles. It's really not that spontaneous. It usually takes a little lapse. I suppose you could do it spontaneously, but it wouldn't come out as good.
CALVERT: Do filmmakers tend to throw names around a lot?
SERY: Yeah, sure. Like Goddard and a lot of these European filmmakers have good points, but I really get mad at film people around here when they say one of these names, then they just sort of start slobbering. It's just like they're good, but you have to keep things in perspective.
CALVERT: Well, the point I was making was that maybe in filmmaking there is more of an emphasis on people rather than styles.
MANEKIN: Styles.
SERY: Yeah, styles.
MANEKIN: The director is the creator and god of a film, he's like everything.
MADAME: Do you make films with an audience in mind or just for yourself?
MANEKIN: Well, like this film *Punky's Dilemma*, I'm making just for myself.
SERY: With me, it's like for yourself, but to other people. Like in writing, you write for yourself with the idea in mind of getting published. Something I would like to bring up is that when you are in a film class, a lot of the criticism you get is from the teacher, and like he already has a preset notion of what a film should do. He will say, like, this is a good shot, and to me, as long as a shot is not technically flawed, then it's a good shot. When he teaches it, he teaches like it's gospel. I find myself just saying that it is subjective. As a filmmaker you have to be really conscious of what is objective and subjective criticism.
MANEKIN: I agree.
CALVERT: Let's suppose you had a film, and you showed it to a class of regular people and to a film class, and the regular people responded much more positively. Which one would you give more credibility?
SERY: I'd give the regular audience more credibility. It's a strange thing. People who are into film know exactly what to look for, whereas with a regular audience, it's more representative.
MANEKIN: I have the opposite opinion on that. Friends will always like what you do, whereas the film course, they are giving you helpful criticism. I would rather have people who are into films like it.

(End tape.)

photos by mike corbis